453

# Social Progress

*The Questing Spirit—*
*Youth Issue*

NOVEMBER 1954

# Social Progress

Published by the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., to provide a forum for the Church on subjects of social concern for Christians. It includes program resources, legislative developments, and guides to worship, study, and action for leaders of social action groups in local churches, presbyteries, synods, presbyterial and synodical societies. Articles represent the opinions of the authors—not the official policy of the Department of Social Education and Action or of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

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## Young People Think It Through . . .

For two days last July at Westminster Fellowship National Council we sat in with a group of high school young people who were wrestling with the knotty problems of Christian responsibility in the area of citizenship. In the beginning the temptation to moralize at a very superficial level was successfully resisted, and within a few moments thereafter the young people plunged into the turbulent depths. It is significant that the discussions in both the high school and college groups were devoted to a search for the most fundamental and basic *questions* which young Christians should be asking themselves about God, the world they live in, and their own destiny —a much more profound undertaking than merely giving easy answers to the wrong questions. One of the "signs of hope" in our day is that increasingly Christian youth are rejecting the pat, simple, and conventional platitudes about moralistic trivialities. Someone has said that "to a wrong question there can be no right answer," and Jesus himself was rather hard on that group which was most certain that it had the answers. Both observations would seem to indicate that in the economy of history and the order of God's providence a premium is placed on the questing spirit.

## . . . and Speak Their Thoughts

Out of the July meeting of Westminster Fellowship National Council comes, among many other things, this issue of Social Progress, which was planned and for the most part written by officers of Westminster Fellowship. Throughout the contents of this issue you will find a continuing thread of inquiry, searching, and raising of questions. If "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," then the realization of one's own limitations must surely be one important aspect of that wisdom.

The lead article is a moving and vivid account by four college students of the insights they gained into the real meaning of a Christian community through an experience at a work camp. The ques-

tions they raise are sharp and penetrating for any Presbyterian who is concerned that his church fellowship be a Christian community.

The second article is a symposium in two parts, written by college students Patricia Rasbury and Howard Warren. With humor and incisiveness the phenomenon of the mass mind among students and the wild-fire spread of gossip are documented and probed.

The third article, "Theology and Social Action," is a search by Phil Bell for the foundations and motivations on which Christian social concern rests and from which it springs.

The fourth article, by Len Fielding, raises searching questions about the effect on children of the not-so-funny comic books and the disturbing problem of how these effects can be mitigated or controlled.

Continuing the note of inquiry, a letter from the Japanese Y.W.C.A. asks Christians of the Western world to think through the implications of nuclear testing; and the reply of the United Student Christian Council of the Eleventh General Assembly, Oxford, Ohio, acknowledges the crucial testing of the bond of fellowship within the world Christian community which H- and A-bomb explosions precipitate.

"Sanctuary" this month was prepared by Rev. Franklin B. Gillespie, Director of Young People's Work, and is excellent not only as a worship resource in and of itself but also as a stimulus for "mining" from our hymnal some of its wealth of hymns which lift up social concern as a Christian privilege and responsibility.

The usual book review section and the other regular features of SOCIAL PROGRESS will be found in their proper place, many of them written by key Presbyterian young people. A "who's who" of the youth writers of this issue will also be found in the back of the magazine.

## As Desegregation Continues

I WAS against it then, and on principle I am against it now, but the kids have made it work."

Thus is quoted one of the executives of a newspaper in a small town where for nearly three years a desegregated public school system has been continuing without incident. The town is Jeffersonville, Indiana, on the Ohio River, as Southern in its mores and culture as Richmond, Virginia, to quote *The New York Times.*

Not so encouraging are the appalling reports that come to us from Mil-

ford, Delaware, and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, where in recent weeks children and adults have boycotted, and demonstrated against, the public schools as Negroes were integrated for the first time. It is our opinion that such semihysterical opposition to the law can be attributed to one or more of three factors: (1) racist agitation organized and financed by such near-Fascist groups as the NAAWP (National Association for the Advancement of White People); (2) indecision, vacillation, and the failure to take a firm stand on the part of school officials; and (3) the infection of children and young people with the virus of prejudice by their parents. Perhaps number two above is the key factor in these denials of the American concept of justice and democracy.

We wish that the many communities in which desegregation is continuing without untoward incident as in Jeffersonville, Indiana, would receive as much publicity as have the sporadic repudiations of justice. We wish too that more Americans were acquainted with the results of a Gallup Poll published on July 10 which showed that a majority of American adults approve the Supreme Court's verdict. Tabulated, the results of the poll appear as follows:

| | *Approve* | *Disapprove* | *Undecided* |
|---|---|---|---|
| East | 72% | 23% | 5% |
| Far West | 65% | 31% | 4% |
| Middle West | 57% | 37% | 6% |
| South | 24% | 71% | 5% |

Again to quote *The New York Times:* "The nation might be spared a quite trying ordeal in the years immediately ahead if it took the problem . . . out of the hands of parents and teachers and turned it over to the children themselves."

As a word of encouragement to communities in which temporary setbacks have been suffered it might be recalled that Woodrow Wilson once stated he would rather fail in a cause which will ultimately succeed than succeed in a cause which will ultimately fail.

In a practical vein, all Christians should be concerned that accounts of communities in which desegregation has taken place successfully reach the public eye, in order to counteract the prevailing principle that only bad news constitutes news. Further, in the words of the most recent General Assembly pronouncements, "we urge all Christians to assist in preparing their communities psychologically and spiritually for carrying out the full implications of the Supreme Court's decision."

## Let's Have Three Options

WHY *is it that members of committees feel that when they do not know enough about an issue to endorse it, they vote against it? It should be obvious that when a person does not know enough about the subject matter of a motion to vote in favor of it, he likewise and by the same measure does not know enough about it to vote against it, but it seldom works out that way.*

The United Nations takes care of this problem by providing three options in the voting procedures. When a vote is being taken in the UN General Assembly, for example, the president of the body calls for votes *for* the motion, votes *against* the motion, and *abstentions.* We commend this procedure. In all democratic bodies the option to refrain from voting is as important as the option to vote for a motion, or to vote against it. We believe that the democratic process in presbytery meetings as well as in meetings of local church groups, such as sessions and boards of trustees, would be greatly improved by the use of these three options in the voting procedure.

## Concerning the Fall Elections

IN MANY churches on the last Sunday of October ministers will urge members of their congregations to go to the polls on election day, November 2, as a matter of Christian duty.

It would seem more appropriate for a minister to urge his people not to vote unless they had studied the issues and were prepared to make a fair judgment between candidates. Certainly, it is not right for a church member or anybody else to enter the voting booth unprepared. It would be better by far for him to stay away.

What is important is for churches to urge their members to register, to analyze the issues and the candidates, and to take part if they can in precinct political activities.

We should also realize that a person does not have much real influence in political life so long as he remains independent and aloof from political parties. American democracy now operates in such a way that the important political decisions are made pretty much in party caucuses and conventions. Churchmen should be encouraged to be active members of political parties. Christian influence can be felt in political life only in so far as Christians engage in party activities.

*—Clifford Earle, Margaret Kuhn, and H. B. Sissel*

# What Happened at Seabrook

*By* LEONARD STYCHE, LYNN BORDINE, RICHARD GRAHAM, *and* ROBERT IRVINE

WHAT happens when twenty or so Christian young people from entirely different backgrounds come together from over the country to work in a service project? The group did not come just to participate in a conference or to attend an inspiring rally, but rather, under primitive conditions, to perform a special service as part of a larger job, to sweat and get dirty and have responsibilities, and to work at different hours in different places and still preserve a Christian community. This is the story of the Presbyterian service project located this summer at Seabrook Farms in New Jersey.

### The Project

Seabrook Farms is a large, privately owned farm and frozen food plant. The farm cultivates some 20,000 acres of its own, and has 30,000 acres under contract to private farmers in several adjoining states. Besides being a unique combination of farming and industry, the Seabrook Farms community is unlike any other in the country. It is an unincorporated village belonging to the company, consisting of Caucasians, Japanese Americans, and recently displaced persons from Germany, Latvia, Poland, and Estonia. Together with the migrant camps in the vicinity this was the environment of the project. The group itself lived in a former CCC camp some six miles from the village.

Briefly, the project had a threefold program: to operate a day camp for the children of the Seabrook community; to assist the New Jersey Council of Churches in its program among the migrants employed by the farm; and to work in the plant itself in order better to understand the total economic and social pattern of the area. While doing all this, members were to live in and experience the fullest meaning of the term "Christian community."

### The Day Camp

The project's major responsibility was with the 140 children from the ages of 6 to 12 who were brought each day from the Seabrook community for a day camp program. They were children of plant and farm workers and represented all the various nationality and racial backgrounds of the community. One of the major problems of Seabrook and one of the challenges with the children was to overcome the barriers of language and tradition which divided the community. The

sponsoring Day Camp Committee of the Seabrook Community House had been itself one of the best influences in the community to bring the various groups into a working unity. For five years it had been laying the plans and raising the necessary money for such a day camp each summer.

Twelve members of the project had the responsibility of the day camp. A carefully supervised beach program at a nearby lake occupied the morning, while a program of crafts, games, nature study, and special events filled each afternoon. In addition to some particular responsibility in the daily program, each counselor had the intense experience of a group of his own with which he spent a major portion of his time—providing an opportunity for actual work with the children.

Those who were day camp counselors felt that this experience was a particular challenge to them as Christians. They were sent to Seabrook to be counselors of children from many different nationality, racial, and religious backgrounds. They were not going to conduct a vacation Bible school. But, in the words of one of the counselors, "we tried to do what we felt much more important in that situation. We tried to live Christian lives, and when children raised questions such as, 'When Jesus comes all the people will be white, won't they?' we tried to answer in the best way we knew."

## The Food Plant

The purpose of having three of the project members working in the frozen food plant was to give all the camp a better understanding of the community and also an insight into the life of the industrial worker of today. It lent an air of economic reality to the project to have three boys pack lunches at night for an all-day shift of work, beginning at 7 A.M., or leave an early supper for an all-night shift from 6:30 P.M. to 5:00 A.M.

For the plant workers themselves, the experience meant working alongside men who spoke little or no English, and consequently there was little conversation. Even had there been no language barrier, conversation would have been difficult, for everyone was geared into an assembly line as one vegetable or another was processed. "You are expected to be part of the machinery," said one of the boys, "and even more efficient. After the first few hours you become mentally stagnant, and the only thing that enters your mind is the time. With nine hours a day, six days a week, a person has little energy left for taking care of a family."

Having three workers in the plant with their long and shifting schedule made it more difficult in many respects to develop a closely knit group in the project. But the day camp counselors understood the parents better through this experience and

the boys themselves learned in ways that no textbooks or classroom could teach.

### Migrant Camps

Four members of the project were assigned to the New Jersey Council of Churches to work in migrant camps. Two girls were placed in the Day-Care Center operated by the Council for the children of migrant workers. Before the center was established, it had been the practice of the mothers to take their young children and babies with them into the fields. Here the mother would place them at the beginning of a row, go down the row picking beans, and finally return about an our later ready to move the children to the next row and start picking again. The Day-Care Center has done away with this system at Seabrook and provides adequate care for children from three months to twelve years from 5:50 in the morning until work for the day is ended in the afternoon.

The two boys in the migrant program were given the job of helping to run a recreational program for the workers and for the young people. This included boxing, softball, basketball, movies, youth clubs, church choirs, etc. They also assisted in three Sunday schools and two churches.

Part of the job of these workers was to take back to the rest of the project a knowledge of the migrant, his place in the Seabrook community, and a sense of the total migrant problem.

After a summer of this threefold experience, plus the intense community life within the group itself, something happened at Seabrook. The members of the project had gone with the idea of doing a Christian service in the same manner as you might serve in a church or Bible school, and to do it in a setting of congenial fellow Christians who were there for the same purpose. As a result of the varied program carried on, the different hours worked, the different jobs to be done, things did not work out this way. Stereotyped answers did not fit in this kind of environment. The common courtesies and outward show of "Christian concern" found in a conference setting did not go far enough or deep enough to be meaningful.

The conventional signs of "a Christian community" would have been fine if Seabrook had been a conference, but when three members of the project would get together and one would tell of a migrant thrown in jail on a minor and perhaps unwarranted charge, another of a little Negro girl wishing she was white, and another report a problem in union-plant practice, this kind of "Christian community" fell flat. In its place came a new spirit of Christian community with a changed thought life. A deeper probing took the place of simple acceptance. As the time went on, less and less was

taken for granted, and each item was examined on its own merit.

### The Group Asks Questions

During the summer the committee system, which was developed democratically and used to operate the camp, organized discussion groups and educational programs. These served not merely as a basis for discussion and learning but as the groundwork for something more basic: an unconscious study of the thought life of the Christian today. Day-Camp counselors began to ask themselves if they were providing an experience which the children really needed, or whether they ever really met the needs of the children. Project personnel assigned to migrant work were asking themselves if they were really helping the migrant to find himself, or whether they were merely keeping him contented so that he would remain a migrant. The workers as a whole were asking themselves what more than the kind of thing found in a summer conference or in a local church really makes up a Christian community. What effect does a real Christian community have upon the individual? Is it realistic for local churches to talk about being Christian communities, in the deepest sense, when people work all hours of the day and night, seldom seeing one another and seldom participating in the same activities? Throughout the summer, these questions replaced the kind of almost "take it for granted" attitude that prevailed at the beginning.

Whether the purpose of the Presbyterian summer project at Seabrook Farms was primarily to organize a Christian community or primarily to perform a service is not clear. It may well have been a combination of both. Whether it succeeded can be judged only by future happenings in Seabrook and changes in the lives of the members of the project. One thing, however, can be certain: the members became concerned, inquiring people, not seeking the simple outward signs of respectable Christianity and Christian living, but rather seeking the deep and basic answers to the problems that confront the contemporary Christian in the modern complex industrial world.

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**THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE is the title of a new study piece prepared by the Department of Social Education and Action. Based upon the brilliant book by Marquis Childs and Douglass Cater, *Ethics in a Business Society*, *The Camel* is being published by the National Council of Churches and will be available very shortly. It may be ordered from the nearest P.D.S. for 30 cents a copy.**

## How Green Was My Feather?

In April of last year, an interesting phenomenon occurred on several of the campuses across the country. It first came to the attention of the students at UCLA when an article by Shelly Lowenkopf appeared in the April 8 edition of the campus paper, *The Daily Bruin.* Entitled "Wisconsin U. Fights McCarthyism," the article told about a new organization at that university called "Robin Hood's Merry Men." The Merry Men were quoted as stating: "Our aim is to oppose McCarthyism, the leader of which is Senator Joseph P. McCarthy, and to indicate this in our united dissent and resistance toward this policy which has sacrificed individual freedom to expediency, and rationality to hysteria." Mr. Lowenkopf went on to comment that signs of a like organization were developing at our sister campus across town, LACC-SC (Los Angeles City and State Colleges), as evidenced by the mass wearing of the green feather, the symbol of the Merry Men at the University of Wisconsin.

A few days later, on April 12, another article, "Daily News Chief Lauds Green Feather Campaign," was on the front page of the *Bruin.* In it were the results of an interview granted LACC and UCLA reporters by Clinton McKinnon, the owner and publisher of the *Los Angeles Daily News.* Mr. McKinnon told the reporters that it is up to students to enlighten those people who do not realize that Sen. Joseph P. McCarthy is leading this country toward a totalitarian form of government. He added that he felt that the Green Feather clubs are a move in that direction. The article continued by pointing out that the Green Feather movement was originally started by a Baptist minister and four students at the University of Indiana as a protest against the Indiana Textbook Commission's banning of *Robin Hood* as subversive literature. From there it spread to the University of Michigan, to Purdue, and to the University of Wisconsin, where it got linked up with the "Joe Must Go" Club.

McKinnon stated that "a movement like the Green Feather campaign could make students aware of what is going on in the country—not on a partisan basis, but with reason and conviction based on knowledge. . . . A student is entitled to adequate information about as many political and economic systems as possible." However, he explained

that there is a difference between presenting the facts objectively, and trying to convert students in the classroom.

**Most of us reading** Mr. McKinnon's statements agree that the Green Feather campaign *could* make students more aware of what is going on in the country, and heartily applaud his "with reason . . . based on knowledge." Here's what happened:

By April 15, the Green Feathers had spread to UCLA. A *Daily Bruin* article on that date read: "Over a thousand feathers have been distributed on campus this week, in a campaign against McCarthyism. Because of the lack of Green Feather buttons, some students and organizations introduced the wearing of a green feather. Yesterday over five hundred feathers were distributed by various students on campus."

On April 19, Academic Freedom Week officially began, sponsored by The National Student Association. A parade of students wearing the green feather followed a fellow in the garb of Robin Hood to the opening assembly. The Green Feather was now being tied back to its source question by this young man who said that he had come "to launch the arrow of academic freedom."

By this time there was beginning to be some confusion as to what the real significance of the feather was. They were worn almost universally on campus, yet it was difficult to get parallel reasons for wearing them from any two people. The pre-appearance publicity of the Green Feather had built up anti-McCarthyism, and later hinted at academic freedom as being the issue.

By the time Academic Freedom Week was half over, persons quizzed were wearing the feathers because: "I'm opposed to McCarthyism"; "It's because they're trying to ban *Robin Hood*"; "I hate McCarthy!"; and "I'm for academic freedom." One professor was quoted in the *Daily Bruin* as having refused to wear a green feather because "I cannot display my political affiliations, even though I am in sympathy with the wearing of the green." A freshman friend was quite honest when she told me that she really didn't know what they stood for, "but don't they look cute on this sweater?"

No one seemed to know who was paying for the attractively dyed feathers, or where they came from.

The Green Feather has taken on real significance for me—significance in its insignificance. I am forced to ask if the American student is not guilty of the same demagoguery in a sense of which he accuses the followers of McCarthy? Does the "mass" wearing of the green feather lull us into a false sense of security that McCarthyism is on its way out, or that academic freedom is, in fact, safe within our universities? Do we feel that in mak-

ing "united dissent" symbolically against McCarthyism we have fulfilled the responsibilities of citizenship and studentship—or will we too fall victim to the confusion of the slogans current in our country?

That "reason and conviction based on knowledge" we plead for too, Mr. McKinnon.

—*Patricia Rasbury*

## How Pink Is the Breeze?

HAVE you ever played "gossip"? A group of people form a circle and one person begins the game by passing a sentence to the one next to him. The object of the game is to see how distorted the sentence is by the time it reaches the last person in the group.

When I went to college last fall this parlor game was being played on a larger scale. Instead of a sentence, a story was being spread around the campus by two students who decided to play the game. They thought it would be fun to start a rumor and see if such a rumor could turn a student body against a fellow student.

The plan was simple enough. On the campus there were plenty of people who liked to talk and, if given a secret, would soon have it all over the campus. So the word was passed to two people, then four, next eight, finally sixty-four, and before we knew what had happened, the whole campus was talking about Joe College, who had "Communist leanings." "If he should get to be president of the student body, it would result in the starting of a subversive organization on campus," etc., etc.

This was, of course, just an experiment. Joe was in on the whole plot from the beginning and was enthusiastically a part of it. But if it had not been in fun and the rumor had been spread by two jealous people, the result could have cost Joe the election. Only a public announcement and a signed statement in the college paper convinced some who had heard the story that it was all a joke. Even now there is a lingering doubt about this student. . . "Where there's smoke, there's fire," as the saying goes. "Perhaps there *is* something in his background that should be investigated . . ."

Several thousand years ago another group of men started a rumor against a man from Nazareth. He was a man whose only desire was to be of help. But because he had a few new ideas, he was branded "different." In those days, to be different was to be dangerous.

In our nation today, it is still dangerous or suspect to be different. We are expected to conform and not have any new ideas. In our local community, state, and national government people are being halted because they dare to be different.

**Why are we afraid of new ideas?** There is only one answer: We must keep our *status quo*. America is a great country and has a great tradition based on definite ideas. These ideas have brought us wealth. Why change them?

People are so afraid that they accept idle speculation or false rumors simply on hearsay. We find that a few men in Washington can turn a nation against a person by direct accusation or subtle incrimination. We are quick to assess a person's guilt or innocence by association. "He was once at a meeting attended by So-and-So, who is a 'known' subversive. . . . But if it was printed in the Such and Such magazine or newspaper, it's bound to be true."

Why are the American people like this? Don't we have any faith in a democracy any longer? If we continue to act in this suspicious manner, our democratic process soon will be doomed.

We must learn to set forth our beliefs regardless of what others think. But, more important, we should do everything in our power to stop that dangerous game of gossip and to keep from indulging in it ourselves.

We must not permit ourselves to be led as a nation or as individuals by the thinking of others but must begin to stand and act on our own thoughts and ideas.

—*Howard Warren*

# Theology and Social Action

*By* **PHIL BELL**

WHETHER it be sending food to a starving country or voting in a town election, social concern and action are essential to the Christian life. While the faith of the New Testament calls the disciple to orient his life toward a spiritual kingdom not of this world, it does not call him to wait out the "duration" under some shade tree. The disciple is not to turn his back upon the world, but is to have vital contact with it and to live creatively within its limitations. Let us look to just some of the reasons why this is so.

In the first place, we see reason for social action in the New Testament's concern for this present life. In the incarnation of our Lord, God revealed his own eternal concern for, and involvement in, human affairs. Christ proclaimed the Kingdom of God to be at hand, and men were to begin living at once as citizens of this Kingdom. Christ taught men to pray that God's will be done

on earth, and his entire ministry and teaching touched and transformed home and market place. Realization of God's own concern for the earthly life of men is basic to our understanding of the why of social action and this concern is clearly revealed in Scripture.

Also, with teachings concerning the resurrection of the body, with such references to the body as its being a holy temple belonging to God, and with repeated injunction and exhortation, the New Testament guards against a false division between body and soul. Misunderstanding about the proper relation between body and soul leads to much confusion with respect to social action for the Christian. Even though Scripture recognizes the fact of struggle between spirit and "flesh," it does not say that flesh is evil and unworthy in itself. The New Testament does not present a picture of the soul, alone possessing worth and value to God.

Whenever the Church attempts to elevate "the spiritual" or "the physical" to the point of ignoring the needs of persons, the Church is not only being extremely impractical, it is in opposition to the whole counsel of Scripture.

ANOTHER, and the most important, reason for social action lies in the basic force that motivates any action that is truly Christian. This is love. A proper consideration of Christian love will not only aid our understanding of the bases for social action, but it will also help us not to become negative in our thinking about social action. While there is ample cause for shame whenever we realize how poorly all of us have assumed the burden of social action, we can yet never justify recourse to motives of fear in order to "get more people in picket lines."

To be in accord with the Christian faith, social action must always be based on the motive "I want to" rather than "I have to." But above everything else, the Christian can be sure that his faith is not mature so long as he fails to practice what he preaches. He must recognize also that in a society composed of sinful men laws must be made which will, if necessary, coerce evil wills into a modicum of justice for those who must live within our society.

The infinite love of our Heavenly Father is the central motivation for social action. We, the prodigal children, have been given this love in Christ, and ours is the opportunity to display respondent love and gratitude. As we come to realize the nature of God's love for us, we shall be moved to share it with our neighbor. The power of Christ's love not only will compel us to greater concern for our fellow men, but it will sustain us as we reach the point of strain and suffering where we really begin to go into action. For at the point where we must make decisions as to just

what courses of action love dictates, there we may find great discouragement.

As Christian love becomes more and more the motivation of our social action, we shall be kept from numerous errors. We shall not fall into boasting about our efforts, for we shall know that all the good in us is of God. We shall be kept from the error of believing that the gospel is *just* a social scheme designed to bring a new car to every garage. We shall not attempt to decide for God just what role the Church should play in the present times, but shall remain more open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And we shall not feel that God has forsaken us when in the eyes of the world we have apparently failed to bring God's Kingdom to earth. The abiding assurance will be ours that our labor is not in vain, and that all things work for good for them that love the Lord, though even tragedy and suffering be our lot.

It is always a great deal easier to become enthusiastic about something when we have seen it firsthand. One who visits a refugee camp usually comes away more sensitive to the problems of such groups and more eager to render aid. But it is possible while sitting in our own living rooms, or while working in our own local church situations, to come to such an understanding of God's love that we cannot help becoming more sensitive to the needs of all men, more aware of the worth of all human activity, and more determined to involve ourselves in social action. Nor shall we have regard for the difficulty of our involvement.

We can come to realize through a careful search of the Scriptures and an honest study of the hard realities of life that wherever there is suffering, need, fear, or darkness, or again economic or political problems, it is there that we are to attempt to act in love. There can be no simplified blueprints for action, but we of the Church today are not true to the Christian faith unless we are helping one another to become living sacrifices and witnesses in every area of life.

The New Testament concern for the affairs of all human life, the New Testament emphasis upon the person who is a unity of body and soul, and the love that is central to the Christian faith—all three of these are among the most important theological bases for social action. All three provide ample justification for plunging deep into human affairs as disciples seeking to be worthy of the love of the Lord and Saviour of all men, Jesus the Christ.

# The Not-So-Funny Comics

*By* LEN FIELDING

THIS next week, children will spend more than one million dollars on comic books. More than half the available issues will show them the physical passion of sex, the morbidness of the sexually perverted, the violence of crime, the glorification of murder, and the disrespect of accepted civil authority. As a supplement to all these stimuli, each will offer pages of advertisements which capitalize on the results of this unhealthful reading. In one comic book, you can find aids that will change the physical aspects of the anatomy, clear up the "unhealthful" complexion, and teach you "all about boys" or "all about girls." In addition to these you can buy guns, which with little alteration become lethal weapons, or knives. Both have been found to be the tools of juvenile gangs in gang wars and in terrorizing the general public.

Because the space is limited, all the accusations cannot be brought, nor can those that are brought be documented. But for those who are in doubt about the reports of psychiatrists and educators indicating that comics are detrimental to the young people of the United States perhaps a reading tour of nearly any magazine stand would be enlightening.

Comic books are charged with:

- Providing an invitation to illiteracy.
- Creating an atmosphere of cruelty and deceit.
- Stimulating unwholesome fantasies.
- Suggesting criminal and sexually abnormal ideas.
- Creating a readiness for temptation.

These are serious charges brought by a psychiatrist who works with disturbed children.

### Facing the Dilemma

Throughout the study of comic books, their affects and their publishers, many questions keep coming to mind: What if they are, without doubt, responsible for all of which they have been accused, aren't there many worse books on the market available to adults? Besides, aren't they protected by the freedom of the press, and, for that matter, shouldn't they be? To the first question, yes, there are undoubtedly worse books on the market. The difference is that the ones available to adults attract perverted people. The comics that are read mainly by children are accused of perverting people. To the second question, regardless of individual opinion as to whether or

(*Continued on page 20*)

# An Open Letter to the World Y.W.C.A.

To Our Friends of the World Y.W.C.A.:

We know that you are already aware of, and concerned about, the fact that on March 1, this year, the American Government conducted a history-making hydrogen bomb experiment at Bikini atoll in the southern Pacific. As President Eisenhower said in a newspaper interview, "the results of the hydrogen bomb experiment were beyond the expectations of the American scientists," so that the power released at Bikini was a source of amazement even to the American authorities. At that time a Japanese vessel, the *Dai Go Fukuryu Maru*, which was engaged in tuna-fishing a distance of seventy-three miles from the site of the Bikini test (nineteen miles outside of the restricted areas), was showered by radioactive dust. Because we know that you are deeply concerned with regard to the injury that was sustained by the twenty-three Japanese fishermen, some of whom are still in a dangerous condition, and in the effect of the test on the inhabitants of surrounding islands, we, as a Y.W.C.A. in a country affected by the test, have felt under obligation to assemble accurate, concrete information and send it to you.

We have tried to picture for you the actual situation as it was at Bikini, the losses that were sustained, the fearsome effect on the livelihood and the mental state of the population, the reactions of a cross section of people including Christians, as accurately as possible. We hope that this will provide all our friends in the Y.W.C.A. throughout the world with raw material which will be useful as we think together about the problem of the use of such power in the world.

**As Christians, who are struggling with the problem of peace in the world,** we feel that the problem of the existence and use of such powerful weapons as the atom and hydrogen bombs is not a problem between injury-inflicting and injury-receiving countries but is a problem of world destiny about which we all must think. We want it clearly understood that our motive in writing is not to censure the injury-inflicting country but to express our deep conviction that Christians throughout the world today must think and struggle together in relation to this problem which affects the well-being of the entire human race.

The Social Responsibility Committee of the Japan Y.W.C.A., to whom was delegated that task of preparing this material, has consulted physics, medical, and other authorities in various fields, and has endeavored to present as completely accurate a picture as possible. This material has been thoroughly studied by the executive of the Japan Y.W.C.A. and is now being sent to you with the hope and prayer that you will understand our purpose and join with us, as you are led, in relation to our common task.

Yours sincerely,
Tamaki Uemura, President, Japan Y.W.C.A.,
Tokyo, Japan, July, 1954

# The Women of Japan Appeal

Speaking from the standpoint of Christians, we, as a group of Japanese women desirous of the true peace and happiness of the human race, want to present frankly our thought and to make our earnest appeal with regard to atomic and hydrogen weapons.

I. **For the Abandonment of Atomic and Hydrogen Weapons**

When we ponder the fact pointed out by the Dr. Hideki Yukawa, Japanese physics scholar, that the fearfully destructive power of the hydrogen bomb is beyond human control, and when we consider that even a hydrogen bomb test has proven to be such a dreadful and dangerous threat to humanity, we are forced to the following conclusion. Even though the purpose may be to defend the freedom of the human race or whatever other reason may be given, the existence of the hydrogen bomb in itself is a threat to the whole of humanity. Therefore we must continue to press our urgent appeal that the production of atomic and hydrogen bombs be abandoned and that those bombs already made be destroyed. Not only at Hiroshima and Nagasaki did Japan experience the power of atomic bombs, but now the "ashes of death" from Bikini have threatened the lives of Japanese so that Japan alone among the nations is able to make this appeal, out of personal experience, to the world.

II. **For the International Control of Atomic Energy by the United Nations**

At the same time as we appeal for the destruction of atomic and hydrogen bombs, as stated in the first resolution, we also appeal for the realization of international control of atomic energy at the earliest possible date, in

order that peaceful means of utilizing this great power may be achieved. We consider that the speedy accomplishment of such international control is indispensable for life in today's world, and for its actual realization we believe that we can expect the co-operation of the United Nations. Can we not think together concerning what co-operative effort may be possible for us as the World Y.W.C. A. and as Y.W.C.A.'s in various countries in relation to this problem?

We send this appeal from the depths of our hearts to all of you, the Y.W.C.A. throughout the world, who, as branches of our Lord Jesus Christ, are praying with us for the same purpose, the realization of the will of God on earth.

*—Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Japan Y.W.C.A.*

## Youth Group Replies

To the Members of Our Brother Movement in the World's Student Christian Federation in Japan:

We send greetings. We have been confronted in our Assembly with your concern that Christians throughout the world today think and struggle together about the problems of the existence and use of such weapons as the atom and hydrogen bombs.

**Your concern has increased our concern** as we have attempted to face the questions raised by you in relation to the development of weapons of mass destruction. As Christians, we affirm the report of the World Council of Churches, Section IV, on International Affairs, as most adequately expressing our conviction. Within this context we affirm specifically the following sections in answer to your request that we take a stand on this issue: "The thought of all-out nuclear warfare is indeed horrifying. Such warfare introduces a new moral challenge. . . . We first of all call upon the nations to pledge that they will refrain from the threat or the use of hydrogen, atomic, and all other such weapons of mass destruction as well as any other means of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. . . . Yet even this is not enough. The Churches must condemn the deliberate mass destruction of civilians in open cities by whatever means and for whatever purpose. . . . Christians must continue to press for social, political, and economic measures to prevent war. Among these should be the giving of strong moral support for the positive use of atomic power for the benefit of mankind. . . . We must also see that experi-

mental tests of hydrogen bombs have raised issues of human rights, caused suffering, and imposed an additional strain on human relations between nations. Among safeguards against the aggravation of these international tensions is the insistence that nations carry on tests only within their respective territories or, if elsewhere, only by international clearance and agreement."

**We shall inform our Government of the crucial importance** we think these statements have and must have as guiding principles in the formulation of our country's policies.

We are aware, however, that even within the Christian community there exists a difference of political perspective, both between the Christian groups of different countries and between the members of our movement. In order that we may bring our political positions under the scrutiny and judgment of God and our Christian faith, we look eagerly to further study on this question, to earnest conversation with Japanese students studying in this country, and to continued correspondence with your movement. We need to explore the meaning of suffering together as one body. Let us pray for one another that God may be with us in this enterprise and in all things lead us into true obedience to his holy will.

In his name and fellowship, we remain your brothers in Christ.

*—The United Student Christian Council, Eleventh General Assembly, Oxford, Ohio, 1954*

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**GUARDED HOPE FOR NEW SESSION OF THE UN—In a recent briefing session of non-Governmental Organizations to which a representative of the Department of Social Education and Action was invited, Ambassador Lodge stated the following reasons for looking hopefully to the current session of the UN:**

- **For the first time when the General Assembly went into session no organized shooting war was going on.**
- **There is good possibility that an "atoms for peace" program may be set up, with or without Russia, to study and act on President Eisenhower's proposals made before the UN last year. The precise relationship of this organization to the UN has yet to be hammered out.**
- **Now more than ever before the U. S. delegation to the UN is widely representative religiously, geographically, racially, and vocationally.**
- **In the event (devoutly hoped against) of another "Korea" member nations of the UN will undoubtedly contribute more man power than they did in the Korean conflict.**

*—H. B. Sissel*

## THE NOT-SO-FUNNY COMICS

(Continued from page 15)

not the comic book industry deserves the protection of the press, our Church is, and justly so, against censorship by bureaucratic organizations.

Our whole concern can be narrowed down to one point. What is our responsibility as Christians and how can we fulfill it through the organization of our Church?

At Westminster Fellowship National Council this matter was discussed by a subcommittee of high school students. There was a real struggle over the problem. The first reaction was to call for censorship of comic books. But that seemed merely to impound the dilemma, and we finally concluded that Federal or state censorship was not the practical answer to the problem.

We agreed that the matter could be partially dealt with through Westminster Fellowship and study groups in the local church. Still, the control problem lies primarily in the age group that is younger than those included in Westminster Fellowship, and it is in that group where many avid readers of comic books are to be found.

Many in this age group aren't capable of discriminating for themselves. Reading material for this age group should be chosen with at least some guidance from the parents. It is at this point that we must share our concern with our parents and members of the Church who have younger children.

The comic book problem has been sliding by unnoticed for the last ten years. It can be overcome if we are alert to the dangers we've mentioned.

Obviously, very few parents can take the time to read every comic book their children might read. But there is a Committee on Evaluation of Comic Books which publishes a pamphlet now being used in some local churches where the concern has been awakened. There are eighty-four trained reviewers affiliated with the group. They evaluate the comics in detail on three criteria: (1) cultural area; (2) moral area; (3) morbid emotionality. Such an evaluation if used widely enough throughout the country might result in an economic boycott serious enough to eliminate the more objectionable type comics from the many newsstands throughout the country.

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**THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN AND HER HOUSEHOLD is the new circle study guide prepared by the Department of Social Education and Action and published by the Presbyterian women's organizations. It may be ordered from the nearest P.D.S. for 20 cents a copy or 6 for $1.00.**

# Sanctuary

## "SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG"

**Call to Worship:** "O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day."

**Prayer:** "Almighty God, who dwellest in the high and holy place, and with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit: Make us to be still and know that Thou art God. Lift up our hearts to Thee in love and adoration; then of Thy mercy send us forth into the world to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Thee our God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

**Introduction:** We young people in Westminster Fellowship have been searching to discover a reason for our existence. We have sensed that we must be more than a youth organization attached to the Church and which keeps young people active with "religious busywork" without a clear answer to the question, "Why?" We are beginning to have a new grasp of the heart of the gospel message that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." We have seen that this calls for a response which can be only the dedication of all of life. Through the third Westminster Fellowship National Assembly and other experiences in Westminster Fellowship we have caught a new understanding of the meaning of the Church. We have seen that if it is to be the "body of Christ," it must have a new sense of mission. This can only issue in a deeper concern for every child of God.

Often in our meetings when we are trying to express our beliefs and concerns, we have difficulty in finding suitable worship materials. We can find poems and prayers that express a social concern, but we do not know where to turn for hymns. There are a number that are well-known to all, such as "In Christ There Is No East or West," so we use them over and over without learning any new ones.

In this service, we shall learn several hymns that are probably unfamiliar to most of us, but which can be a valuable addition to our worship resources and consequently to our worship itself.

**Hymn of Adoration:** "God of Our Life" (Hymn 88)

This hymn, which stresses our trust in and dependence upon God for all our blessings, is a pledge of our willingness to follow him even "through paths unknown." It was written by the late Hugh T. Kerr on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the church he was serving.

**Suggested Old Testament Readings:** Psalm 66; 92; 95; 96; 98; 101; 147; or 149

**Hymn:** "God the Omnipotent!" (Hymn 420)

It is interesting to note that this hymn, which expresses the longings of the people for freedom and ends with a picture of all people dwelling in peace, is a free translation of the old Russian national hymn.

**Prayer of Confession**

**Hymn:** "Thy Kingdom Come, O Lord" (Hymn 425)

This hymn, which stresses man's basic oneness, points to the fact that the Kingdom of God will come, not through man's efforts, but through God's grace as revealed in Jesus Christ.

**Hymn:** "O Brother Man, Fold to Thy Heart Thy Brother" (Hymn 403)

Written by John Whittier, the Quaker poet, this hymn grew out of his deep concern over the practice of slavery. He sees that only love can loose the shackles of fear and hatred.

**Prayer of Intercession and Petition**

**Hymn:** "Eternal Ruler of the Ceaseless Round" (Hymn 406)

John Chadwick was born into a family of fishermen. Beginning as a shoemaker's apprentice, he was finally graduated from Harvard Divinity School. His entire ministry was spent in a Brooklyn church. This hymn, which calls for brotherhood, was written at the close of the Civil War as his seminary class hymn.

**New Testament Reading:** Colossians 3: 1-17

**Hymn:** "Forgive, O Lord, Our Severing Ways" (Hymn 344)

This hymn, also by Whittier, is especially appropriate in these days when we are asking forgiveness for the division among the Churches, and are seeking to restore our God-given unity in the ecumenical Church.

**Meditation:** It is interesting to note in the Scripture just read this progression, "as you teach and admonish . . . and as you sing." Paul here closely relates our singing to our teaching and concern for others. To the early Christians it was one of the most meaningful experiences in their worship. We note that Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn before they went out following the Lord's Supper.

Too often we take our hymn singing very lightly. We use this time "to get people up" or "to seat latecomers." We sing "the first two and the last stanzas" and render the hymn meaningless because we omit a vital part of what the author is trying to say. We must think more carefully about the words we sing, for in this part of the service we all become participants. What we sing must be consistent with what we say, for this is the time in the service when we all join in witnessing.

**Hymn:** "Once to Every Man and Nation" (Hymn 373)

This hymn was written by a young man in his twenties who was deeply troubled by the Mexican War. Its message could not be more timely for the days in which we are living.

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Hymn:** "O God of Earth and Altar" (Hymn 419)

Written by the well-known literary figure, G. K. Chesterton, this hymn makes us aware that God is concerned with the sins of nations as well as individuals, for he is ruler of the earth as well as of altars and temple.

**Benediction:** "Go in peace; God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, preserve and keep you this day and for evermore. Amen."

*—Prepared by Franklin B. Gillespie, Director of Young People's Work, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education*

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NOTE: This worship material may be used in one service which is given over to learning new hymns which express a social concern, or one new hymn may be introduced at each of a number of services. In the latter case, you would undoubtedly wish to secure additional information about each hymn. A helpful resource is the *Handbook to The Hymnal*, published by The Westminster Press. In either case, call particular attention to the words, so the full message may be caught.

Prayers may either be written by the worship leader or be taken from *The Book of Common Worship* (1946). All hymns are from *The Hymnal* (1933). Both works are published by The Westminster Press.

# Christian ACTION

## UN NEWS NOTES

**General Assembly**—The Ninth Session of the General Assembly opened promptly at 3 P.M. on September 21 with practically all seats filled—delegates, press, consultants, visitors. The Eighth Session had been adjourned the afternoon before. Mme. Pandit, who had filled the office of president so ably, asked the delegates to stand for moments of prayer and meditation, then offered a brief statement. Excerpts are interesting and significant—"I wish to strike a note of hope. . . . None of us will underestimate the difficulties; but equally none of us is unaware of the intense yearning of mankind for a break in the clouds that have for too long overshadowed the world."

Before they could proceed to the election of officers, the Soviet delegate proposed seating Red China. The U. S. delegate offered a motion to postpone that consideration until another year. This was carried.

Eelco N. van Kleffens, of the Netherlands, was elected president. He is a diplomat with wide experience. He served in the secretariat of the League of Nations, as foreign minister of his own country, and as ambassador to the U.S.A. He was the delegate who signed the charter at the San Francisco Conference, and has been the delegate to the UN since its beginning. Four institutions in this country have given him honorary degrees—the Universities of Michigan and Southern California, Hope College, and Franklin and Marshall. On alternate days Mr. van Kleffens uses English and French. After admitting that he would not occupy the chair with the grace and charm of Mme. Pandit, he pledged impartiality: "What the world expects from us here is a contribution to general peace on a basis of live and let live. Mere coexistence will not satisfy people; corpses can also coexist. The world needs much more than that."

The more than sixty items on the agenda will first be considered by one of the six working committees before coming to the Assembly. Among the knotty problems to be discussed will be colonial issues, such as the demand of Greece for self-determination for the people of Cyprus; Indonesia's claim for Neth-

erlands Guinea; race relations in the Union of South Africa; troubles on the borders of Palestine; and many others.

**The U. S. delegation** to the UN is composed of John Foster Dulles, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., James J. Wadsworth, Mrs. Oswald B. Lord, C. D. Jackson, Senator H. Alexander Smith, Representative James W. Fulbright, James Phillip Nash, Roger W. Strauss, C. H. Maloney.

**Statelessness**—There are 40,000,000 people throughout the world who are without a country. The UN has given consideration to them through a conference of plenipotentiaries on the Status of Stateless Persons. The conference has been meeting at headquarters trying to work out a convention or treaty assuring them of either being granted citizenship where they are living or at least giving them the rights of aliens.

**The Women from Pakistan**—Princess Abida Sultan is an interesting new delegate from Pakistan. She is a sportswoman, pilots an airplane, hunts tigers, plays squash and polo. Yet she has worked closely with the Government and comes to her first diplomatic assignment to represent her country on the social, cultural, and humanitarian committee. She is a Moslem.

Begum Liaquat Ali Khan, who was in the United Nations and a fine interpreter of the women of her country, has become the new ambassador to the Netherlands. As president and founder of the All-Pakistan Women's Association, she has done much to gain franchise for women and to develop schools, hospitals, and cottage industries.

**Health**—A report on the World Health Organization's work in the Eastern Mediterranean area was circulating among UN delegates. It showed that from six projects in 1950, the work had expanded to forty completed projects with fifty-seven in current operation. Eleven million dollars has been spent to eliminate disease and to provide for sanitary projects; 448 nurses, doctors, sanitary engineers have been sent abroad for special training.

**Children**—The 26-nation executive board of the UN Children's Fund approved a total of $12,180,075 for planned projects in 56 countries and territories of Africa, Asia, Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, and the Western hemisphere. Several important projects are under way: milk for the children of South Korea; help in evacuation of mothers and children in Viet Nam; assistance in the flooded areas of India and Pakistan; aid for 50,000 mothers and children on the Jordan-Israel border.

*—Mabel Head, UN observer*

# STUDENTS, BIRTHDAYS, AND POLITICS

"Christianity and democracy go hand in hand." Belief in this tried and true maxim has motivated Minnesota college students to take an active part in politics.

Studying books and theory in political science classes produces knowledge that can only be tested through actual political participation. This realization, coupled with a strong sense of Christian civic responsibility, has prompted intense activity by Republican college students throughout Minnesota.

One of the most basic privileges and duties in our democratic form of government is conscientious and regular voting. Recognition of this has provided the Minnesota Federation of College Republican clubs with one of their major projects of the year—doing everything possible to get out the vote.

Even though there have been proposals in Washington to lower the minimum voting age to eighteen, the present minimum of twenty-one admits a good share of college students to the polls. But sometimes more than the privilege to vote is needed in order to get a person to the polls. To help at this point, a First Voters organization started work early in the summer.

Their first task was to procure the names and addresses of all those who turned twenty-one since the last election—a tremendous number of people. This was done through plain hard work in various offices in the county courthouses, principally the office of the county superintendent of schools. Then, of course, there was the job of compiling usable lists for mailing purposes and for use by the candidates.

Naturally, as Republicans we were interested in influencing voters to vote for our party and candidates. But the real significance of this effort was the opportunity it gave us to inform these new voters about the details and procedures to be followed in exercising their vote.

The First Voters organization was not all work. Birthday parties were organized to provide an opportunity for meeting candidates personally for discussion of controversial campaign issues, and for social fellowship.

It was the hopeful belief of college Republicans that young voters of Minnesota went to the polls better equipped and more informed as a result of the First Voters work.

The project provided a chance for college students, in their search for Christian social action, to apply their book knowledge and gain practical experience in politics, learning lessons about the complexity of government and campaigns and training for the future, as better civic and Christian leaders.

*—William J. Hempel*

# ★ Citizenship ★

For the first time in our history, the number of persons eligible to cast a vote will exceed the 100 million mark in the elections this fall.

Emphasis must be placed on the word "eligible," for unless there is a marked change in our voting habits nowhere near that number of persons will go to the polls. An "off year" election always brings a smaller vote, and even in "presidential years" the number of persons exercising the franchise has been very disappointing.

In 1948, when Mr. Truman was elected, only 51.4 per cent of those eligible voted, the smallest percentage in modern times. The 1952 elections saw the largest turnout in history, but even then only 62.7 per cent of those eligible went to the polls.

Such a situation must always be cause for concern, but in times as critical as those in which we live today it is a circumstance that we can ill afford. This franchise was dearly bought by the founders of our nation, and in recognition of this it poses special responsibilities. We are reminded of the words of Goethe: "That which thy fathers have bequeathed unto thee, earn it anew if thou wouldst possess it."

As Christian citizens we must accept a special responsibility toward an enlightened and educated electorate that will be active at the local precinct level and never fail to discharge its obligation at the ballot box. If Christians in America could be fully mobilized to accept their true responsibility as citizens in the political arena, many of our problems on the local, state, national, and international level would be nearer solution. Let us make sure that each of us is a positive "statistic" when the votes are counted in November and that we have done our bit toward securing a record turnout of "intelligent" voters.

In so far as we are able, may we cast our ballots for men and women of proven integrity and vision. This observer is wholly committed to the efficacy, stability, and wisdom of a strong two-party system, but to a greater extent than in the recent past both of our great parties must adequately recognize the necessity for choosing and promoting candidates of this stature. The best of systems will founder if this requisite is not met. We would beware of those more interested in "promoting a cause than in fostering the true welfare of their country," and we strongly affirm, "He serves his party best who serves his country best."

At this writing, one month in advance of the election, it seems highly probable that the 84th Congress will find the House of Representatives controlled by the Democrats with Senate control still in doubt. The Re-

publicans hold a slight edge in predictions for control of the Senate at this time. The present slim majority held by the Republicans in both Houses provides no cushion for the traditional loss of seats by the party in power in an "off year" election. Only once in modern times (1934) has the party in power failed to lose seats in a mid-term election. In line with this normal swing of votes in an "off year" contest, some Washington correspondents are saying that Democratic control of the House by anything less than 25 votes can be construed indirectly as a vote of confidence in the Eisenhower Administration.

Be that as it may, as we go to press reports from across the country indicate very little interest in the election as a whole. There are some exceptions to this, but a general apathy seems to be apparent. There seems widespread agreement that the Eisenhower Administration is not an issue, partisan claims to the contrary, and that local issues and personalities will be the determining factors. Mr. Eisenhower's personal popularity remains high, but it is difficult for this to be transmitted to individuals in the party. To the extent that he exercises his influence in the closing days of the campaign may be determined the success or defeat of some candidates. A strong appeal by the President might be sufficient to tip the balance in some of the marginal districts.

Whatever the outcome when the returns are in, it is to be hoped that candidates and constituents will find themselves united in what President Eisenhower has called "a common devotion to the cardinal principles of our free system . . . and [will] cooperate unreservedly in striving toward our truly important goals." The coming days will require much wisdom, imagination, patience, and courage on the part of our national officials. They will need the advice, support, and prayers of Christian citizens. If the demands of the time are to be met, sharp and relentless partisanship must be relegated to the background in pursuance of vital and far-reaching decisions affecting our national welfare and world peace. These considerations will have special application if present indications materialize and control of the House and Senate is divided between the two parties.

**Universal Military Training—** A major problem to be dealt with in the next session of Congress will undoubtedly be some form of universal military training.

The present draft law expires next June, and the Pentagon and other interested organizations and agencies have been hard at work devising some acceptable plan which would provide for the continuing draft of men for military service. At present, there is no unanimity or agreement among various interested officials in

the Government and in the Pentagon on any specific plan or program. In fact, there is considerable disagreement revolving around the difficulty of drafting men for active military duty and UMT at the same time, the determination of the Defense Department to continue drafting men for military service, possible means to be taken to build up a large military reserve, and the problem of the expense involved in the adoption of a full UMT program.

The President has so far carefully refrained from supporting any plan for UMT since he entered the White House. It is to be hoped that public opposition will become so vocal that he will continue to refuse his support.

It seems to this observer that here is an area where the United States might give positive evidence, at this time, of its peaceful intentions and sincere desire for a reduction of world armaments. Since there is no "shooting" war anywhere in the world today and in view of the Administration's announced policy of a defense program based on reduced man power and increased fire power, it would seem that the churches might take a position in accord with the resolution adopted by the National Grange at its last annual convention in November, 1953. The resolution as adopted by the Grange stated: "We reaffirm our resolute opposition to universal military training. We favor the use of the Selective Service System in national emergencies. We recommend that upon the expiration of the present Selective Training and Service Act in 1955 peacetime military conscription be abandoned in favor of our traditional voluntary, rather than compulsory, military service."

**Federal Aid to Education**—As we go to press a special House Education subcommittee has opened hearings on what it terms a "brick and mortar" approach to Federal aid to education. Rep. Carroll Kearns (R., Pa.), chairman of the subcommittee, says a survey indicates that 10 or 12 billion dollars are needed to place all school-age children in adequate classrooms. He states further that the present program, wherein the Government is giving financial aid to areas where school facilities are overburdened by Federal activities, has proved so satisfactory that "it has helped to prove that school construction is the answer to any phase of Federal assistance to education."

According to proposals being considered by the subcommittee, school construction aid would be channeled through the U. S. Office of Education and existing state educational agencies.

*—Helen Lineweaver,*
*Washington Office*

# About Books

**The Negro and the Schools,** by Harry S. Ashmore. The University of North Carolina Press, 1954, 228 pp. and index. $2.75.

In this day of inceptions of new ways of living, and particularly in the light of the recent Supreme Court decision, the end of "biracial education" in the United States appears to be inevitable. But the problems (and the solutions) that arise as the process of desegregation continues are especially crucial in the area of education because "interest in schools is universal and one that directly involves not only the taxpayer but his family and therefore his emotions."

This recent book, *The Negro and the Schools,* summarizes and interprets the findings of more than forty scholars who gave intensive time, study, and research to what came to be called the Ashmore Project. With the readability of a historical novel, *The Negro and the Schools* describes the long line of litigations which last May culminated in the Supreme Court's declaration that segregation in the public schools is unconstitutional, per se, and demolished the century-old doctrine of "separate but equal."

Even though the study points out that segregation of itself tends to create an inferiority complex in the Negro, it overlooked the guilt complex created in the minds of many white persons. Nevertheless, the book is impressively objective and free from bias.

It cites repeated instances where the races have mixed with little or no difficulty and points up the fact that education in its broadest sense is the key area in the whole attack on segregation in our society.

The importance of an early solution to the problem is well understood when one realizes how far-reaching is the news about cases of prejudice. The report states "that a minor racial incident in Selma, Alabama, is likely to rate more space on the front page of a Bombay newspaper than the most incisive attack upon the Communist terror by an American delegate to the United Nations."

In America, "the Melting Pot," integration should be a natural inclination rather than an arduous task where a few must plan a "program to 'sell' integration to the community" (p. 83). The Ashmore report suggests that where the leadership is decisive and unvacil-

lating, past experience shows that this goal is an entirely realistic possibility in American public education.

—*Willie Baker*

**The Student World,** second quarter 1954. Special issue devoted to *Academic Freedom.* Published by the World's Student Christian Federation, Geneva, Switzerland.

"There is no abridgement of academic freedom today; the trouble is that somehow people don't speak as freely as they could." This was quoted by Dr. Paul Lehmann in his article on academic freedom in the U.S. to point up the naïve way a number of Americans circumvent the burning question.

In the United States the limiting factors are political as is true in Communist countries. In many parts of Europe where Protestantism embraces only a few per cent of the population, Roman Catholicism is the curbing power. This same religious intolerance is true to a degree in Asia, especially in India. Regardless of these differing factors the problem remains the same—the controlling power is afraid of the expression of contrary philosophies in their zeal to propagate their own ideals.

Everywhere, too, the problem arises in the light of this situation, "What is the nature of the university and its relation to society"? Mauricio Lopez and E. Van Brugen raise many thought-provoking questions along these lines. Their essays are, like the others, well written but not easy reading. All of them would be profitable reading for anyone concerned with academic freedom. The one exception is a superficial treatment of the problem in the USSR by Victor Malinin in which academic freedom is equated with "Everyone can study."

—*James Wiant*

**Vegetables and People,** Department of Social Education and Action, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education. 16 pp. 25 copies, 75 cents. Copies may be ordered from your nearest P. D. S.

*Vegetables and People* is a pamphlet on prejudice. It makes use of 30 line drawings and 800 words of choice text to describe racial prejudice and to suggest ways of overcoming it.

The pamphlet is small in size (16 pages, self cover, 3½" x 6½") yet it probes the subject more deeply than most of the books about prejudice we have read.

*Vegetables and People* speaks directly to the reader. It even provides a fifteen-point check list by which the reader may test himself. It can be read in less than ten minutes, but we dare say that most of the people who pick it up will stay with it a good while longer and feel called upon to do further study.

Prejudice, says the pamphlet, is

not usually caused by conscious ill will. It is the result of *ignorance* of firsthand knowledge about members of other races, *fear* of economic or social loss, *insecurity* or a sense of inferiority and the need for a "scapegoat," and *unawareness* of any experiences or ways of thought other than those of one's "own" group.

Ridding ourselves of prejudice, the pamphlet continues, is like taking a refreshing bath, throwing up the shades to let the light in, breaking down the walls we have built around ourselves and others, discovering a new world of persons for the first time.

The pamphlet may be distributed in churches for general reading. It can also be used to spark group discussions. For example, some of the more subtle signs of prejudice mentioned in the pamphlet are bound to elicit such questions as "Why?" and "To what extent?"

Young people and youth groups in particular will find *Vegetables and People* useful, as they did its popular form-wise predecessor, *Ethyl Is Not a Lady*, which dealt with the problem of alcohol.

*Vegetables and People* was written by Rev. H. B. Sissel, Associate Secretary of the Department of Social Education and Action. Before coming to the Department, Mr. Sissel was minister of an interracial church in Detroit.

—*C. E.*

**The Geography of Hunger,** by Josué de Castro. Little, Brown & Co. 337 pp. $4.50.

A distinguished scientist examines the subject of world hunger and its causes, and clears the way for a solution of the problem that lies at the root of most of our difficulties.

Dr. de Castro points out that hunger has been the most common cause of war and revolution. Hunger is the most degrading of adversities: it shows that our existing culture is unable to satisfy the most fundamental human necessities and it always implies society's guilt.

Authorities have estimated that about two acres per person will supply the indispensable elements of a rational diet. As yet the area cultivated has not reached one eighth of the earth's natural possibilities. Essentially, it is not a problem of production, but rather one of distribution. Mass hunger which affects two thirds of the world's population is a man-made plague.

The crucial point of this book is the argument that overpopulation does not cause starvation in various parts of the world, but that starvation is the cause of overpopulation.

The right kind of food for the people of all nations is entirely possible according to Dr. de Castro's plan. As chairman of the Executive Council, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, he is in a position to know.

—*Mrs. L. M. Wilson*

## FREEDOM AGENDA

### The Bill of Rights and Our Individual Liberties

In the last issue of *Social Progress,* attention was called to the Freedom Agenda Program, a project of the Carrie Chapman Catt Fund, to stimulate the organization of local discussion groups on individual freedom.

*The Bill of Rights and Our Individual Liberties* is the first in a series of pamphlets designed to assist these local groups in their study. It is intended to convey to the reader a sense of the meaning and spirit lying behind our heritage of freedom as set forth in the Bill of Rights.

The pamphlet may be ordered from Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, 164 Lexington Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. 25 cents. Others in the series to be released soon are: *Where Constitutional Liberty Came From, Freedom of Speech and Press, Constitutional Liberty and Seditious Activity, The Constitution and Congressional Investigating Committees,* and *The Constitution and Loyalty Programs.*

## DECEMBER—PROBLEMS OF THE AGING

Members of the Adult Department are working with the editors of *Social Progress* in the preparation of the December issue. It is our hope that the contents of the magazine will be useful to ministers and other leaders who work and counsel with the older people in the churches. The issue will include information regarding older adults and their relation to the economic structure, social security, health and welfare, and many other phases of this broad concern of the Church.

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## WHO'S WHO AMONG THE AUTHORS

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**Patricia Rasbury** is a senior at UCLA and vice-moderator of WF (that is, chairman of the student section). She studies social work and is active in the WF in California. Pat was a delegate to the United Student Christian Council conference at Evanston (at the time of the WCC) and the General Assembly at Oxford, Ohio.

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**Phil Bell,** former moderator of Westminster Student Fellowship at the University of Texas, is now a middler at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He has experience in ecumenical conferences and work camps at home and abroad.

**Len Fielding** has written for SOCIAL PROGRESS before—in last year's November issue. He is a graduate of Mankato High School, Mankato, Minnesota, and is moderator of the WF Synod of Minnesota. He was a delegate both to WFNA and WFNC.

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**William J. Hempel** is state chairman of the Minnesota Federation of College Republican Clubs. He is a "part-time journalist and the son of a Presbyterian minister."

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